



*Of
European
Descent.*

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Of European Descent

BY

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NOTE TO THE READER.

In giving the following sketches to the public, the authors would submit that their aim has been not so much attractive narrative, or startling originality of construction, or beauty of imagery or fine choice of diction; but rather a plain statement of facts, a retailing, without any resort to fiction, of certain events within their own experience, strictly true in every particular; believing that in so doing they are, perhaps, throwing a searchlight on an insidious danger which is threatening family life in this Colony of South Africa.

M.F.W.
A.E.-P.

April, '09.

Johnnie.

JOHNNIE came to us as if by chance.

Walking one day through the thick wattle 'bush' which lies around our farm, one of my dogs, who was running ahead, suddenly barked sharply. This was followed by a quick cry of alarm. Pushing on quickly through the thick growth of saplings I came upon two respectably-dressed white women. One was an old woman, the other much younger.

Both had their arms full of "donny-balls" (fir-cones) and dead wood, and both seemed genuinely alarmed at my dog's loud remonstrances. I hastened to impress upon them that my dog was really more bark than bite, and then, after a few more remarks with the object of reassuring them, I was about to continue my stroll, when the younger of the two—a woman of about thirty-five—asked me, (evidently recog-

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nising me as the owner of a neighbouring farm) if I knew of anyone wanting a "nice quiet boy" as farm help.

As a matter of fact we had been looking for some time for a white boy, having had about enough of coloured boys and their eccentricities.

"Yes," I said, "we shall be glad of a good boy. Do you know of one?"

"It's for my son," said the woman, "and I am sure a better and more willing boy couldn't be." And the older woman nodded her head as if endorsing her daughter's recommendation.

She seemed herself such a quiet and civil-mannered woman, and I was so prepossessed by her, that an arrangement was entered into that she should bring her boy to see us the following day with a view to arranging terms.

Seeing the grandmother's white wrinkled old face, and the mother's blue eyes and light hair, I was absolutely astounded when the boy brought next morning proved to be

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unmistakably coloured. And very much coloured at that!

“He is very dark to be your son,” I remarked.

Whereupon she explained, with a slight flush, that though of German extraction herself, on both father’s and mother’s side, she had, soon after her arrival in Cape Colony, married a coloured man.

I was so prepossessed in her favour, and the boy himself added to a not displeasing face a voice and manner so quiet and unassuming that in spite of a strong prejudice against his mixed parentage we engaged him.

Johnnie remained with us on the farm for about a year, and beyond an inveterate — no doubt inherited — love of lying, proved as good a farm boy as could be desired.

Johnnie was slight, somewhat delicate and girlish in appearance, soft-voiced, docile, willing, and obedient; but baffling, and always surprising us, by continual small trickeries and aimless, almost laughable, deceits.

His features were good, and one could imagine his growing into a

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handsome man. But he had the unmistakable Oriental eyes—a legacy probably from some Cape Malay ancestor — eyes which seem to be always accentuated in the half-caste, perhaps owing to some accompanying discrepancy of fairer skin or lighter hair. Large liquid eyes, which looked full into yours, seeming to be full of truth, yet strangely enough quite unconvincing, and betraying in spite of their protesting truthfulness a depth of falsity.

He had no glaring faults beyond his habit of lying — lying with or without motive apparently for the sheer love of it.

But he served us well and we grew to take an interest in him, both for his own and his mother's sake; and we were at some pains to educate his mind, while instructing him in his various duties. But we never really learned to like the boy, and we never felt that we really knew him.

There was always something elusive, that *something behind*, which a sensitive person is so keenly conscious of in intercourse with

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the coloured races. And this seems always the case. We live among these people; we have taken their country; we make laws, and insist upon their obedience; we legislate; we organise; we instruct and advise them for their mental and physical advancement; we civilise them.

They ape our dress and mannerisms. They imitate our follies, and, alas! our vices. They learn in our schools, they advance along certain lines, they begin to assert themselves as civilised men, even as our equals. They intermarry with us, to the hideous detriment and disintegration of our race.

But we know as little of the real man — the ego in the coloured man—now, as in the time when he was to us merely a savage, seen only by ocean travellers in casual glimpses on long voyages—a cannibal, a ferocious beast, to be parleyed with, and traded with, only from a safe distance.

The white conqueror may spend a century in the conquered black man's country — a century spent in striving solely to understand

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him, and to govern him with understanding; and at the end, know no more of the real heart of the subject race, and have affected and improved their original character as little, as if he had never been there!

The leopard does not change his spots.

There is a sinister something—a sort of natural barrier erected by nature herself, between her black and white children. A barrier, the essential quality of which ever eludes us, but which is ever insurmountable and impassable, and which in itself is surely proof-taken that the two races can never mingle satisfactorily.

There can never be any union of mind between them.

Examples crowd on the mind. The Zulu, the Red Indian, the Mohammedan of India, the Japanese, the Chinese.

Cases of love, of liaison, of offspring resulting, of marriage even, between white men and women of those races are innumerable. But enquire, and you will find, that

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years of intimacy, of cohabitation even, never bring to the white man any true knowledge of the motives, the lines of thought, or the springs of action, which guide and inspire the coloured partner.

It is the same in India—there are Civil Service officials who have served over thirty years for a pension, who have devoted their lives and worn out health and energy in the service. Men, scholars, Indologists, experts in all the Indian dialects, both colloquially and clerically, Sanscrit and Persian students, to whom the couplets of Makhfi and Saadi, the love-lorn stanzas of Hafiz, and the wisdom of Khayam, are as familiar as Shakespeare and Tennyson, who will tell you that, after a lifetime spent in observing the native, they quit the country—the scene of sometimes half-a-century of conscientious labour—as aloof from the life and soul of the people they have exploited as the day they entered it.

And it was this aloofness which we were always sensible of in our relations with Johnnie. But while he was with us we learnt much of

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his family history, which is interesting as bearing upon the peculiar complications and difficulties arising from the mother's ill-advised marriage with a coloured man.

There were some quaint incidents resulting from her variously-tinted family of children, which she, on different occasions, recounted to us with quite passionate indignation, and without any sense of their humorous side. And indeed they failed to seem comic because of the strong maternal love which was the cause of the indignation.

On one occasion it was a question of Johnnie's education.

Johnnie had two sisters, pretty flaxen-haired, blue-eyed children such as may be seen by the score in any English or German village. He had also a brother, who was, however, a shade darker than himself. The two little girls were receiving a capital education, at a school presided over by a German of Lutheran persuasion—a school where no children of "colour" were admitted.

Johnnie's mother had hoped that Johnnie would enjoy like advant-

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ages; and the story she told of her disappointment in this connection was partly pathetic and partly exasperating.

She herself had been well educated in Germany, and wished her eldest son brought up in a way befitting the very respectable traditions of her family.

Her fancy was captivated by an advertisement of a cheap school, kept by a German woman in the suburbs of Cape Town, where only a "limited number were received"; and she presented herself, with a view to arranging for Johnnie's reception at this desirable seat of learning. The German preceptress seems to have been most affable to the quiet fair little mother, and agreed without demur to receiving Johnnie as one of her pupils. Next day, however, when Johnnie was presented to his future instructress a serious difficulty arose.

The school was for "white boys only", and to the German school-mistress Johnnie was "black".

It had to be explained to this white mother, that other parents

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would object to their fair-skinned children associating with this more than parti-coloured offspring of hers.

The interview between the two women, as related by Johnnie's mother, would seem to have been almost dramatic. In recounting it she was tearfully enraged at what she considered an injustice to her boy, and an unmerited slight to herself.

"A nasty, insulting woman, that schoolmistress," she declared, "as good as told me that I had disgraced my country, she did. She said she always taught her German pupils that though they were in a foreign country, they must always love the fatherland, and try not to bring disgrace on it, and she was astonished that a German woman should lower herself to the level of a black man. But," she continued, bridling, "I let her understand my husband wasn't no Kalfir, and that my Johnnie was as good as any white boy, and better than most of them, I did that."

But through all her bitter resentment, it was easy to see that more

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than half its origin lay in the self-reproach roused by being made to realise, perhaps for the first time, the irreparable injustice to her children wrought by her marriage.

Another incident related by Johnnie's mother was also in its way both sad and humorous, involving as it could not fail to do, curious and inadvisable speculations in the mind of both the children concerned.

One day, Johnnie, having nothing better to do, had strolled down to the little school-house, where his sisters were being educated, and had waited in the road at the gate, until he was joined by his youngest sister. They were standing there talking, waiting the coming out of school of the elder sister, when the schoolmistress herself passed through the gate on her way home. Seeing the little girl—who as it happens was an especial favourite of hers—talking apparently familiarly with a very much coloured boy, she drew the little girl aside, and said in a low voice of disapproval, "I am

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quite sure your mother would not like you to talk to coloured boys in the street, Jenny," and so passed on in conscious rectitude, feeling she had done her duty.

The child was too utterly taken aback to offer any explanation to her teacher. But she recounted the occurrence to her mother and coloured father, in the presence of Johnnie, on reaching home.

The various and complicated feelings involved in the various members of the family can be imagined.

And there the matter stands. Johnnie's sisters, by reason of their fair skin and blue eyes, can be received as equals by children whose parents would object to their association with Johnnie. The sisters might marry in course of time European husbands, whom, however, they might any day astonish by presenting them with a woolly-haired black child.

While instances like the foregoing are only some of the many mortifications which Johnnie in after life may, through no fault of his own, have to encounter, unless

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he be content to sink to the level of the Cape coloured man, marrying in turn a coloured woman and bringing up a progeny of dark-skinned babies, any one of whom, however, may to their own misfortune, "throw back" and appear with their grandmother's blue eyes and sandy hair, and so on, *ad. infn.*

Margaret.

I had just returned to my home in Rondebosch, after a visit to the lovely little town of Ceres — a visit that will remain in my memory for all time.

It was in the early part of 1902 and actually within a month or two of the declaration of peace, but to all appearances in the Cape Colony the war was as far from an end as ever, and the district of Ceres was, for the time being, quite a centre of hostile activity, both British and rebel.

This picturesque little town was the home and birthplace of the well-remembered rebel Commandant Theron; and at this time, he himself, with a strong commando, was known to be hovering just outside the township, while his aged father and mother still resided there.

As I drove through the town, my charioteer, a khaki-clad "Tommy" pointed them out to me on the

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stoep of their house—an old grey-haired woman and an old man with a white beard. The incongruity of this old couple living in apparent peacefulness in this town of an English colony under British rule and protection, while their son was commanding a force of rebels outside—did not prevent a feeling of kinship in my heart.

That old woman, for instance: who could say what anxious pangs were rending her mother-heart at thought of the danger surrounding her outlaw son, of the wounds or death which might at any moment come to him? My own heartache for my boy, who was risking life and limb for Queen and country, taught me to feel for her.

Ceres was a regular hot-bed of sedition and disloyalty. The Dutch-Reformed pastor, the Dutch doctor, and nearly all the resident farmers and Dutch heads of families, had been deported to Malmesbury ; while those who were allowed to remain at the outlying farms were under martial-law supervision, and forced to report themselves to the British commandant at stated

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intervals, being under suspicion of a readiness to help the rebel commando which was lying outside amongst the mountains with useful intelligence, food, clothing or shelter, should opportunity offer.

A tolerably strong British force was considered necessary to be stationed at Ceres in order to hold the town in case of an attack. Among other detachments a squadron of the Colonial Cavalry Regiment to which my son was attached happened to be quartered there, and there seemed a prospect of its not being immediately moved on.

My boy had been on active service since almost the commencement of the war, and I had not seen him for many months. His regiment had seldom been so near to me, or in so accessible a station as Ceres; and I determined to have a glimpse of him if it was in any way possible.

Of course a permit under martial law was necessary before I could travel from one town to another; but a certain amount of influence I possessed had gained

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me the desired grace, and, closing my house and leaving it and my various pets in charge of my servant, I had journeyed to Ceres.

I shall never forget my first impression of that wonderful drive from Ceres Road—the railway station—up the mountain, through “Mitchell’s” pass, and then down into the quaint little town.

It was near sunset when I arrived in the main street, the broad straggling main street bordered on either side by great trees and sluits of running water, spanned at intervals by primitive crossings of large paving slabs.

There is in Ceres the same pastoral peace and restfulness which is so strikingly characteristic of so many of the old-world Dutch towns and villages in the Colony. Added to this the wondrous beauty of its situation,—a sort of plateau among the mountains, high above the surrounding country, its marvellous fertility, its wealth of fruit orchards, its numerous picturesque low thatched houses, make it one of the most attractive sites in the Cape Colony. I passed

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there the most peaceful time that I can remember during the three years of the war.

Week after week went by till more than a fortnight had passed,—blessed weeks, that, so far as concerned the precious squadron which owned my boy, held an un-hoped for pause in active hostilities; week after week, and the squadron still halted at Ceres, and I saw my boy daily. Nearly every night he was allowed to dine with me at the hotel at which I was staying, being, of course, obliged to rejoin camp at an early hour, as an attack or ‘surprise’ was always possible.

Staying at the same hotel was the English commandant, a remarkably smart and acute man, who was held in great awe—and detestation—by the various rebels and ‘suspects’ around; and with whom it was politic for even myself to be on favoured terms if possible, for martial law is a terrible tyrant.

Queer little “permits” and “passes” were necessary for the simplest of ordinary acts and the most harmless expeditions or

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journeys! If I wanted to burn a light after ten o'clock at night, or entertain "more than five" friends, or drive more than half-a-mile beyond the town pickets for a pic-nic, the autocrat commandant must first be sued for permission and for the grace of a little blue paper with his signature—little blue slips soiled with much supervising which I now treasure as curios!

They were strange times,—times never to be forgotten,—times when one was careful of one's speech in presence of strangers; when a chance question on a subject of military operations or political interest, however apparently innocent, made one reticent, fearing unwittingly to do harm to the "cause". Times when merely to be the bearer of a Dutch name was almost to be "suspect", and outside the pale of confidence!

One day I took a drive in a different direction to my usual wont, and was called to "halt" by a picket. By some mischance I had forgotten to bring my "pass" and I had to alight while my Cape

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cart was conscientiously ransacked "by order of the commandant" before the good-humoured Tommies concerned were satisfied that I was not taking out contraband supplies or letters to an out-lying farm which lay on my route, the resident of which was under suspicion.

Another day my English mail letters, private and precious, from loved ones at home, reached me, the covers torn and evidently tampered with, stamped with the official triangle and "opened by order of the censor" on the envelope.

During the day one visited the few shops remaining open. There were only one or two, nearly all having been summarily closed for some offence under martial law, or for suspected disaffection. Or we watched the Tommies erecting blockhouses in the middle of the pretty quaint streets; or concocting elaborate wire "entanglements" in promising places, to entrap the enemy and trip up his poor horses should he attempt to enter the town unawares in the darkness.

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And in the evening in the pretty dining-room of the hotel, the electric light blazed, and the dainty little tables shone with the glass and silver and tasteful decorations of flowers, and every table had its complement of khaki-clad officers;—some young, some old, some already famous, some full of ambition and high hopes of fame to come. Colonel Capper, who was commanding the column to which my son's regiment was attached—Colonel Doran—General French, who was so successful throughout the campaign—one after another many with well-known names came and stayed at this charming little hotel.

And there was gay chatter and merry laughter, and flirtations and lovmaking and heartburnings just as if no red war were ravaging the land, as if danger and death might not be waiting for each and all of the brave hearts there.

I could not help thinking at times of Thackeray's account of the Brussels ball before Waterloo.

Yes, indeed they were strange times — how strange one scarcely

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realised until they were all past and gone.

But after all the halcyon time came to an end all too soon. Some troops with Colonel Doran's column which had marched out from Ceres got into difficulties, and a convoy was seized by the Boers. The column was in a dangerous position. Some British scouts had been shot in cold blood, and the rest of the column had orders to go to the relief.

In the early morning, soon after daylight the camp was broken up, and with the sun's rays tipping the mountains with gold, and touching up the mountain passes and the flowery valleys that were all white and rose with fruit orchards in bloom with extraordinary beauty—a beauty that seemed quite incongruous when hearts were breaking—I saw my boy ride away with his troop, saw him wave his hand at the last turn of the road, watched him out of sight, with eyes that were half blind with tears, not knowing when, if ever, I should see his dear face again.

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Ceres, beautiful as it was, no longer had any attraction for me. By the grace of the omnipotent commandant I was enabled to send a wire to my servant at Rondebosch to expect me the next evening; and was allowed the further concession of a Cape cart and a couple of commandeered horses, with the services of a Tommy as coachman, to take me down the hill to the station of Ceres Road.

I arrived at the little station of Rondebosch after dark. It was an unusually dark night, but my house was not far away, and securing one of the waiting station traps, I and my luggage were soon at my garden gate. I was somewhat surprised to find that the windows of the drawing-room, which looked to the front, were unshuttered. The lamps within were not lighted, and the dark, uncurtained panes seemed to stare out into the darkness, reflecting back the carriage lamps of my station trap with a blank cold air of unwelcome. It seemed a dreary home-coming to the house where we had known many pleasant hours, before the

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miserable war had come to break up for ever so many happy homes.

But, supposing that Margaret was busy in the kitchen preparing dinner, and perhaps had not expected me quite so soon: I went round the verandah to the back, to where the three long French windows opened into the dining-room. But here also all was darkness. The blinds were not drawn down, and the curtains were not closed. There were no lamps lit, nor could I hear any sign of life within.

I tapped loudly at the windows, but there was no response, no sign of Margaret. So I returned to the front door, and plied both bell and knocker with energy; still no sign of Margaret! It really seemed as if the house was deserted.

After a few further fruitless efforts to obtain an entrance I finally went back to the waiting trap and told the driver to drive me to the house of an old lady friend, almost my nearest neighbour.

I found Mrs Hill just finishing dinner. She was surprised to see

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me, as she imagined I was still at Ceres. I explained briefly, and asked her, if by chance, she had seen my servant go past at all that evening.

"I saw her this afternoon, going towards your house with some parcels, as if she had been marketing," she said.

After hearing of my experience at the house, Mrs Hill insisted on my having a glass of wine and something to eat, which indeed I sadly needed after my journey; and then proposed accompanying me back to the house in the trap.

I was puzzled and annoyed at Margaret's leaving the place unprotected after dark. But still I had no serious misgivings. She had evidently not received my telegram—for in those days when the lines were often "blocked" with "service" telegrams, private wires, if accepted at all, had to take their chance and turn in transmission.

She might have gone to see some friends, and had not yet returned; for after all, though so dark, it was not yet nine o'clock. I had every confidence in Margaret. She

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was a quiet Scotch girl, somewhat over thirty years of age. She had not been in the country much more than a year, and had entered my service with a good character from her previous situation.

I quite expected to find that Margaret had returned home during my stay with Mrs Hills. However, it was not so. The place was just as I had left it.

We went through a repetition of my former endeavours entirely without success.

Then we stopped and looked at each other. It seemed to me there was nothing to be done but to pay the cabby and ask him to put my luggage on the stoep, and drive Mrs Hill to her house, while I could sit in one of the Madeira chairs which furnished the verandah to await Margaret's return.

But Mrs Hill had been many years in this Colony, and had that profound distrust of servants in general which seems so common here.

"My dear," expostulated the old lady, "I certainly cannot leave you here alone. You can never tell

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what servants are capable of. The white ones become worse than the coloured ones after they have been a year or two in the country. Very likely your girl and her friends have been robbing you all the time you have been away, and when you sent word you were coming back they've made off with all the valuables they could lay their hands on. I don't believe your girl is coming back at all.

According to her, the only course to pursue was to send for a police man, "Not that they are the slightest use," she continued. "My belief is that they are all hand-in-glove with the servants and other thieves, black and white. At any rate the servants know they will never get caught and punished, and that's what makes them so brazen in thieving."

I knew my old friend's idiosyncrasy on this point, and did not share her distrust. But after some further argument it was decided to send the cabby to the police-station with instructions to bring back a policeman with him in the trap if possible.

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The trap returned very shortly with a burly, red-faced, red-whiskered constable whom we knew well by sight, being accustomed to see him daily sauntering the regulation official saunter along the main thoroughfares of Rondebosch.

It was explained to him that I was anxious to get into my house, even if it became necessary for the law to effect an entrance by force.

He stared at us for some seconds with an expression as stern and disapproving as if he had been called upon to assist in a burglary. He seemed to be considering whether he had better warn us, that what we said might be used as evidence against us later. Presently he seemed to decide that we were not so guilty as he had at first assumed, for he began to tramp slowly and heavily forward, and then ensued a solemn procession of three around the house: the constable first with his lantern, and we two women at his heels.

He tried each door and window in succession, only to find, what we had already ascertained, viz.: that

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they were securely fastened from within, and he threw the light of his bull's-eye deftly through the uncurtained panes into every corner of the various rooms.

"No one there!" he ejaculated, in a deep, rumbling voice at each inspection.

The stoep ran round three sides of the house, but the fourth side, on which lay the kitchen, pantry, and servants' room, had no stoep, but lay flush with the garden path. The blind of Margaret's room was drawn down to its full extent. It had never occurred to me that Margaret could be in her bedroom. So it was quite a shock when our constable after directing his search-light through a rent in the blind drew back and said in quite a new tone

"Sommat queer here!"

"What do you mean," cried Mrs Hill and myself together.

"Seems sommat queer here," he repeated. See here, marm, is that your girl in there?"

Feeling very much puzzled, I looked through the chink he indicated, while he threw the light so

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as to enable me to see the interior.

What I saw was a figure I at once recognised as Margaret. A limp, gruesome thing, in an attitude which to a policeman is perhaps familiar enough, but which to one seeing it for the first time, was full of untold horror. It was half-undressed, and lay, or rather hung, sideways out of the low stretcher-bed, until the head nearly touched the floor.

"What is it? What has happened? Is she dead?" I asked, half sick with horror.

"Can't say, mum. Drunk, perhaps," said the policeman, stolidly.

But his words carried no reassurance to me. So far as I knew, Margaret had never drunk anything stronger than coffee since she entered my service, except once, when I had insisted on her drinking a glass of wine to the health of the King and Queen, at the time of the Coronation.

But the policeman proved to be right. When he had forced the door and entered the house Mar-

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garet was found to be not dead, but drunk, hopelessly drunk.

A number of empty bottles found concealed under the bed pointed to the conclusion that she had been in the habit of going to bed drunk for many nights. The marvel was that she had not long ago been burnt in her sleep, she and my house together; or, as the constable said, died in a fit from hanging head downwards.

The poor girl's subsequent explanation revealed a pitiful story enough. That she had been drinking heavily lately she did not attempt to deny. She did it to "drown her misery" she said.

Margaret, as I have said before, was a Scotch girl, gentle in manner, unusually refined for her station in life, not by any means pretty, past her first youth, but still neat and attractive in appearance.

She had come to us with an excellent character as cook, from a rich family living in a large house not far away. It had been her first situation on her arrival in Cape Colony. Besides Margaret herself

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there were, as servants, an English house-parlourmaid and—a coloured coachman, who also acted as valet to his master, had a room in the house and took his meals with the two English servant girls.

This man, "Harry," had been in the service of Captain——, (who was a retired officer from a Colonial regiment) for eight years—ever since he was a lad of 16. He was a clever rider, and a good coachman, and a great favourite with Captain—— who always took him on his frequent shooting expeditions.

It seemed an undoubted fact that Harry was a remarkably smart and good-looking fellow, and for a coloured man both well-mannered and well-educated. So that his footing in the house was above that usually accorded to a coloured servant.

So, though repugnant to white prejudices and instincts, it is yet quite possible to conceive how the young Scotch-woman, fresh from Scotland and "mission services," and her minister's exhortations to love and befriend the "poor

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heathen in foreign lands" was quite ready to be kind to any "black man", even if old and repulsive, as a matter of duty and charity. And she found him instead intelligent and handsome, dressing like a gentleman in his master's cast off suits, aping successfully—as the Cape-boy can and does—his master's military bearing, his very walk and gestures, taking off his hat and shaking hands with Margaret if he met her anywhere in the street, carrying a cane and smoking cigarettes in a manner which seemed to her simple mind to raise him to a far higher social plane, than that of the country bumpkins of her native village.

Suffice it to say Margaret was fascinated—dazzled.

* * * * *

She had left her situation with the —'s, on the plea of wishing a quieter place with less cooking, at the suggestion of her lover who for his own part had no wish to lose a good place, where he was extremely comfortable as the consequences of discovery.

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Margaret, with an abandonment of grief that was terrible to witness, mingled with passionate self-reproach on account of her old father and mother, and respectable family at home, declared there was nothing for her but to "make an end" of herself. Even the last miserable resort (to my mind) of a marriage with the coloured man Harry, to which Margaret herself had piteously clung, as making her "an honest woman," was impossible. For it transpired that he already had a wife, though he had kept Captain — in ignorance of the fact.

I said what I could to console the half-desperate girl. But what consolation is possible in such circumstances as her's? And, besides, such is the selfishness of human nature my own troubles soon drove all thought of her from my mind.

The very next day a telegram from the officer commanding my son's column told me the boy had been seriously wounded and was then in hospital at Worcester.

I left a sufficient sum with my friend Mrs. Hill to ensure all

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necessary care and comfort for Margaret at a Salvation Army maternity home. But I could do no more. I felt I must go to that hospital bed in Worcester.

More "permits" more "passes," more journeying past block-houses, in trains crowded with khaki-clad Tommies. Trains that seemed to crawl as trains had never crawled before. Endless inspections, and minute scrutinisings—that seemed foolish and unnecessary—of my permit at almost every station, by officials who seemed slower and more stupid than ever officials were before.

But the train reached Worcester at last, and I found my boy.

* * * * *

I never saw Margaret again, and had no tidings of her after she left the Salvation Home. I made enquiries from the matron, and was told that she had left when her baby—a coloured one—was three weeks old. The matron understood she was going to Johannesburg. She had refused to become a member of the Salvation Army,

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and had said that she did not require work to be found for her.

So this daughter of a respectable Scotch family—too proud no doubt to call the law to her aid for alimony or support of her child—seems to have drifted away and been submerged like so many other unfortunate creatures. For from this time forth all trace of Margaret seems to have been lost.

Harry, the coachman, remained in the service of Captain —, and could daily be seen mounted on one of the captain's horses, smart and debonnaire as usual, holding by the leading-rein the pony of his employer's little daughter, a pretty little girl of about nine years old, with the care of whom (such was his master's confidence in him) he was unhesitatingly entrusted.

It may be necessary to point out that Captain and Mrs. — were quite favourable specimens of their class. Both were pleasant good-hearted souls, considerate of the comfort of those around them, wilfully harming nobody. They were kind to their dependents. Their servants were well-fed and

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well-paid. They were not irreligious either; they and their children attended the service of their church with regularity and decorum.

Their women-servants took it in turns each Sunday to attend one service. The horse and trap were never used on the Sunday morning, so as to give their coachman an opportunity to perform his religious duties, if so inclined.

Both master and mistress would have been shocked and wounded at any suggestion that they had failed culpably in the discharge of their responsibility towards any of their servants. And yet these two English people had so little *real* sense of that responsibility towards two English girls separated from all family ties, and deprived of all home influences, and so oblivious of that duty of upholding the white race, which is so strong a duty in a country like South Africa, as so to arrange their household as to allow a coloured man daily and unrestricted intercourse with them on *equal terms*.

Richard.

RICHARD stood about three feet in his stockings, when he first came to us as hired man.

I was looking over the sty at the young Berkshire sows, which the Superintendent of the Government Piggeries at Tokai had just sent us, when I heard a thin piping voice enquiring was it here that "a gentleman wanted a man to help with the pigs?"

I explained to the small figure before me that I should be glad of a strong *boy* for the purpose.

Richard was dressed in a shirt and trousers, the latter held up by one brace ingeniously crossed over his shoulder from left to right. He planted his legs far apart, and, with his hands in his trouser pockets, looked at me with a wizen little white face which might have belonged to a man of sixty, and the anxious blue eyes of a baby as he explained:

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“ Well, my brother Willie is stronger than me, but he has got a job with a green cart, so he can't come, but I thought I should do.”

“ Who told you to come?” I enquired.

“ Oh! the lady met us, and asked Lizzie if I hadn't a brother who could help look after pigs, so I've come.”

It would have been little short of criminal to intimate to this self-reliant young man that he was too small for the post intended. A young Britisher honestly striving to earn a livelihood in this country, must be encouraged at all costs.

Having ascertained his name, Richard was instructed to bring his mother or his father round the next day, to settle preliminaries.

His father couldn't come Richard explained. He worked during the day at the Docks, and was night-watchman as well at a warehouse—where the unfortunate man slept was a problem—but his mother would come.

When Mary returned to the farm later, she recounted to me her meeting with a pretty white girl,

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leading a baby-brother by the hand. We laughed together over its sequel, Richard's visit and interview with me, and wondered what would come of it.

The following day, at about six o'clock, when everybody in the house was comfortably settling themselves to a second sleep, we were roused by an alarming uproar. All the dogs on the farm were barking, cocks and hens were clucking, and even ducks and geese were helping to swell the unaccustomed clamour. In the midst of this turmoil of sounds, there was just audible, a timid pecking at the back door, barely recognisable as a knock. It was Richard, our would-be new man, with his sister the same pretty girl, with great Irish eyes, of the day before.

Though evidently terrified at the strange dogs, Richard, with a white face, was standing his ground manfully. And on my appearance, immediately stepped forward in front of his sister, to explain that his father and mother, being both too busy to come, his elder sister had come with him,

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and that he was prepared to commence work at once. Evidently Richard took himself and the situation seriously, and we had to do the same. Our enquiry as to wages, hours, etc., elicited from his sister Lizzie the statement that "mother said" that we could have Richard "for his food." Something in the white pinched face of the child—little more than a baby—suggested that, perhaps, food would be the best recompense for his labour, and so the bargain was struck.

Richard endeared himself to us in many ways. The child was not a common child by any means. What his parentage was, as regards the antecedents of his father before coming to South Africa, we never learned. But there was something in his quaint manliness and self-possession strangely unchildlike, but yet pathetic and interesting.

As may be supposed, Richard did not *do* much for "his food"; but that was altogether from lack of inches and muscle, and not from lack of willingness or earnestness

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of purpose. Richard, with set face and panting breath, dragging a pail "to water the fowls," was a sight to make mothers weep! That he spilled more than half over himself and on the ground on the way, is an insignificant detail. Richard, chopping logs, the thickness of his own little finger, was a sight for the gods. But the good intention of earning his livelihood, like the man he supposed himself to be, was unmistakable.

By standing on tip-toe he could just manage to raise his eyes on a level with the lowest of the pigsties. Holding on determinedly with his thin, grimy little fingers, to the edge of the corrugated iron boundary, he would stand, by the hour together staring at the great Berkshire boar within. "Billie" could roar like a lion at the Zoo waiting to be fed when the hour for his dinner approached, and he swung his great carcase backwards and forwards in the sty.

One day, as a joke, and to see what the child would say, "Now, Richard," I said, "into the sty with you! We are going to send

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‘Billie’ away. You must jump in and catch him while I hold the sack open to put him in.”

As well expect those puny arms to tackle a wild elephant, and I was curious to see the effect of my words. There was a look of unmistakable fright in the wide blue eyes, and the old-young face went a shade paler even than usual. But all he piped was—“Shall I take off my boots?”

It was impossible to help feeling a satisfied pride in recognising in this scrap of Colonial humanity the true grit and in-born bull-dog pluck of the Britisher.

Richard was not very regular in his attendance. There were often gaps of a day, or even two, in his services. He would explain his absences, on reappearance, as having been “sick.” The excuse was doubtless a true one, for it was evident the child was far from robust.

When Richard had been with us for a few weeks, he one day volunteered a request that Lizzie might come and work as well. There are always odd jobs for boys and girls on a South African farm like ours,

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a farm somewhat dilettante—on amateur rather than strictly practical lines—and Lizzie was told she might come.

She was a tall slip of a girl, looking more like fifteen than her real age of twelve, and, as has been already said, she was strikingly pretty, in a picturesque and Irish style. She was very quick and intelligent, could wash a little, iron a little, scrub a little, and was remarkably deft in cleaning and preparing fish and vegetables for the cooking-pot, and could produce a serviceable fire from a few twigs and fir-cones—quicker than any gipsy.

A pretty trait in her character was her motherly care of the little brother, who, it is sad to say, showed little appreciation of her devotion, and, though little more than half her years, even at that tender age, showed a truly masculine contempt for a sister's advice and authority.

Richard, as we have said, gave his services on the understanding that he worked for his food. But

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Lizzie had stipulated for an additional few shillings a month.

The two children played at work smoothly enough, until Lizzie had been with us a month. They arrived—when they did arrive—at about 8.30 in the morning, in time for breakfast; and would leave for home after their tea. During all that time, we have never set eyes on either the father or mother.

On the day when Lizzie's few shillings were due, Richard came to the back door in the afternoon, quite pleased and excited, with the news that his mother was there. Guessing that she had come for her daughter's earnings—"Ask your mother to sit down in the kitchen," he was told, and say, "the missis will be there in a minute." On entering the kitchen, great was Mary's astonishment to find seated on a chair with Richard clasped on her lap—a tall limp-looking woman not unfashionably attired in mourning, not bad-looking by any means, but—*black!* Not yellow, but black!

Surprise held Mary dumb for a few seconds.

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“Are you Richard’s mother?” she said at last, scarcely believing it possible.

“Yes, missis,” said the woman rising, somewhat unsteadily, to her feet.

Early in the afternoon though it was, she was unmistakably the worse for drink. Having, no doubt, as we understood when we knew her better, anticipated her daughter’s wages by a loan from a friend.

We were glad to hand over Lizzie’s wages and, with what cordiality we could command, we dismissed the woman as soon as possible.

Richard’s mother came to the house several times after this, at odd intervals, to request a “glass of water,” on which occasions it was impossible to doubt she had a “thirst” on! And whenever Lizzie’s wages became due she never failed to put in an appearance. But, except for her evident affection for her children, she was a most objectionable woman, and her visits were not encouraged. It

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was only by degrees, and in the course of time, that we learnt various particulars of the family history—some from the children, and some from Mrs. Maitland herself.

We made the acquaintance of Richard's father also. He proved to be many years older than his wife. A small apple-cheeked wrinkled old man, with blue eyes and face not much more wizen than Richard's own.

His story was the story of many a respectable young Britisher of the working-classes. He had come to South Africa years ago, when white helpmates were not as plentiful as now, and had met somewhere and had married somehow the present Mrs Maitland. Apparently he was a good workman, and earned a good enough wage at day and night work, which it is to be supposed his wife dispersed chiefly in drink, for, after the first month, Lizzie's wages were regularly, not only anticipated but exceeded in small dribblets.

Yet he seemed to be not ill-satisfied with his shiftless partner ;

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and she, on her side, acknowledged him to be a "very good old man," and a "good father to the children."

But it was brought home to us, what is so clearly marked in these mixed marriages, that whether the white man mates with a black woman—or, sadder still, *vice-versa*—the white partner rarely seems to raise the coloured mate to the higher level. It is the white that invariably seems to sink to the level of the partner chosen.

And it was a strange fact, that none of the associates of the children, so far as we could gather, seemed to be English or even European friends of the father's; but all coloured, all acquaintances of the mother's. Lizzie and Richard were both white in appearance and complexion, but of the many people, both children and adults, who passed outside the ring-fence of our farm, it was noticeable that the only ones with whom they held any conversation were coloured.

At the risk of seeming prolix, we repeat that, humiliating though

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the admission may be, and improbable though it may seem in this intercourse between black and white, it is *not* the "superior" race which raises the inferior; it is the white which sinks to the coloured level of thought and morality. There is a powerful but baneful force in the black nature which debases and deteriorates the white which comes under its influence.

Something—some innate loss of self-respect perhaps, owing to the unnatural act perpetrated—some irresistible and narrowing pressure of surrounding circumstances—some consequent separation and isolation from former and purer associates and higher estate—a certain hopelessness of retrieving the former position, forces the fallen one, in despair, into the arms of the new class into which he or she has drifted.

On what other grounds can be explained what follows?

That the strongest possible ties of affection bound together the various members of the Maitland family it was impossible to doubt. The delight of both children, on

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the various occasions when the mother found pretext for coming to the farm, was pretty to see. And the woman herself, though she had only parted with them that morning, would invariably bring them a bit of fried fish, or a cake, or some such dainty, as though after a separation of weeks! Whenever she, or they, mentioned the father it was with evident signs of pride and affection.

And there was an elder sister, "Annie," of whom all of them combined to speak in terms of such loving admiration as is unfortunately rare. Once, when Mary remarked on Lizzie's remarkable beauty, Mrs. Maitland exclaimed at once, "Oh, yes; Lizzie is well enough, but you should see my daughter Annie!" with the same remark repeated in different forms on many occasions.

Here it might be said that it was characteristic of Mary that she was always attracted by a pretty face, and more particularly a pretty child's face; and Mrs. Maitland, being the mother of two girls so strikingly attractive, perhaps led

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her to listen to the details of her family with more than ordinary interest.

One day Mrs. Maitland turned up as usual on "pay-day," to receive what small balance her frequent "advances" had left of Lizzie's wages. After all the usual banal remarks, which she considered suitable, she drew an envelope from her pocket, and took out a photograph. It was a large, handsome and exceptionally well-finished portrait, by a well-known Johannesburg artist, of an exceedingly handsome young woman in a low-cut evening dress.

While Mary examined the picture, Mrs. Maitland remained silent, evidently waiting for some remark to be made.

"What a beautiful girl," said Mary, truthfully enough.

"That's Lizzie's sister Annie," replied Mrs. Maitland, "that I told you has had such a good place as housekeeper in Johannesburg for more than a year."

Knowing the high salaries paid in the Transvaal to white servants, and the great amount of indulgence

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and liberty often allowed to them, the elaborate coiffeur and fashionable attire of the girl in the photograph did not surprise Mary, for she quite understood that a young and pretty girl, in a rich family in the Golden City, might easily have a "good time" in her own class. And it was not until later that the true facts came to light.

It was a few days before Christmas that Mrs. Maitland came to "give us the compliments of the season," as she said, but, as we well knew, to get the glass of wine which, quite against her conscience, Mary was always induced by broad hints to give her.

The wine drunk and the compliments paid—"Lizzie and Richard are working very well. They are helping me make some konfynt, and we are very busy," said Mary, wishing to get rid of the woman as soon as she plausibly could. "I think there are two shillings still due of Lizzie's wages, Mrs. Maitland; I will pay you now, though it is a little before the time, and I am sure you will be glad to get back to your little ones."

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“Yes, mum,” said Mrs. Maitland, shaking some crumbs of cake from her dress and standing up. “And I thought you would like to see the new photographs my daughter has sent me.”

From a series of wrappers she produced two photographs, one of a bold-eyed rather good-looking young man, wearing a white waistcoat across which meandered a thick gold chain, the face good-looking enough, but coarse and unmistakably Jewish. The other was the portrait of a young woman with a baby on her knees. The face was not one to be forgotten. The same pretty oval face and low forehead, the great wistful dark-fringed eyes. “That’s Annie and her dear little baby, and that’s her husband,” said Mrs. Maitland. And it was impossible to mistake the complaisant pride in her look and tone.

“Her husband!” ejaculated Mary. “Your daughter Annie is married then? I thought Annie was the daughter who was in service with Mr. Moses —, in Johannesburg?”

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“Yes, that’s so,” replied Mrs. Maitland, “and she’s going to be married at the New Year; that is Mr. Moses in the picture. He’s a very rich gentleman indeed, and they keep a motor-car, and he has sent me five pounds as a Christmas present. And Annie says she has everything for the asking. And the old man (meaning Annie’s father, Mr. Maitland) is going to write and say they must get married as soon as possible now. Annie says that when Lizzie is a few years older she is sure she can get *her* just such a nice place, too, as housekeeper, in Johannesburg but she is too young yet.”

The horrid, callous sentences dribbled on, and Mary felt too wrathful to make any remark. She pushed the nauseous photographs towards the unnatural mother, with a sensation of disgust and turned to her jam-making without a word.

Mrs. Maitland, quite unconscious of the unfavourable impression she had produced, embraced her children tenderly and effusively, and,

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picking up the two shillings from the table received a curt "good afternoon" from Mary and departed.

What is this extraordinary influence that the coloured woman who ensnares a white man into marrying her exercises over him?

A common yokel, an uneducated boor in England, a drink-sodden brute whose wages go to the nearest public-house, who will kick his wife cheerfully to death, who leaves his children to starve with calm indifference, is nevertheless ready to risk his life in the "punishing" of the seducer who "ruins" his daughter.

While here was an Englishman with two beautiful daughters of whom any father might be proud, and, according to his wife's oft-repeated statement, a good father to his children, so deteriorated from all moral sense as to acquiesce in their shameless barter in accordance with the loose ideas of his coloured wife.

Henrietta Macpherson.

HER name was Henrietta Macpherson. Like so many in Cape Colony, she was of mixed parentage. Her mother was German, her father a Scotchman who had been, according to his widow, an engineer employed upon the Cape Government Railway.

At the time of our meeting with Henrietta the Scotch father had been dead some years; defunct also, according to his widow, owing to a too affectionate adherence to the native "drappie"; and he had been followed in the affections of his relict by a coloured successor.

We think affectionately of Henrietta to this day. As a "general servant" she was about as inadequate as it is possible to conceive; but her good humour was almost boundless, and she cheered many a rainy day and many a monotonous south-easter with a good laugh at her vagaries.

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And a great redeeming point that atoned for a multitude of shortcomings was her undoubted affection for us—though it proved inconvenient on one or two occasions. It was impossible to get rid of her; she absolutely refused to leave us!

Henrietta had a broad freckled face, with pale blue eyes which were relieved from commonness by a queer upward turn at the outer corners such as one sees in Chinese faces and in some cats. In fact we had long afterwards a dear Chinese-looking little cat, born on Easter Sunday, to which we were much attached, and to which we gave the name of "Easter San," whose likeness to Henrietta was quite remarkable.

Henrietta's hair was of that scanty colourless description so often seen in both Scotch and German, and she wore it dragged tightly back from her bony forehead into a hard little knot at the nape of her neck.

In the discharge of her duties with us, Henrietta was required to wear a white cap and apron. This cap, with its long streamers, she

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used to endeavour to fasten on the top of her tightly-coiffed head by means of a long hat-pin. Unless it had been possible to drive this hat-pin through her skull, it is difficult to imagine how she expected to attach the cap. The fact remained that any sudden or quick movement on the part of Henrietta always resulted in the loss of the cap, and in turning about to look for it she generally contrived to stand upon some portion of it before it was discovered.

The usually ruffled state of the adornment can be imagined. It generally appeared as a dingy collection of rags hanging in a rakish manner on either side of her head impartially.

It was Henrietta who initiated us in the delightful mysteries of "Hoppidie." We cannot answer for the correctness of the spelling, but an endeavour has been made to give the proper pronunciation. It would seem to be a sort of national "dance and song"—a boisterous step-dance accompanied by a sort of rollicking doggerel rhyme in an

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extraordinary patois and very popular with hoydens and half-grown boys in the Peninsula.

Only when parents are out of sight and hearing, however; for "Hoppidie" seems to bear a reputation of suggestive fastness. Something of the seductive impropriety of the can-can, combined with the delicious abandon of the "Tarantella." It was some time before we induced Henrietta to give us a representation of "Hoppidie." It was evident that the idea fascinated her vanity and her imagination, but her conscience intervened.

Her mother was in the habit of "giving her a hiding" whenever she was discovered indulging in the surreptitious delight of "Hoppidie," she told us. But her reluctance was overcome by our persistent desire to witness the bacchanalian performance. And to see Henrietta perform "Hoppidie" was a sight to see.

Before commencing, she would stand poised upon one leg for a few seconds staring solemnly into vacancy, as if waiting for inspiration,

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suddenly lurching forward with a wild whoop and a loud clap of her hands. Then followed one or two verses of absolutely incomprehensible rhyme interspersed with clumsy hops and plunges and more claps. Not the least comical part of the exhibition was the portentous gravity of Henrietta's demeanour throughout.

To many Colonial readers this dance of "Hoppidie" may be quite familiar, but to us it was quite a novelty then, and to this day remains an unintelligible mystery.

The last few months of Henrietta's service with us were passed in Kalk Bay, a small fishing village on False Bay, where we rented a little house for a year.

Kalk Bay, with its fishy smells and its glorious sunsets. Its dirt, its heavy sand, its hopelessly incompetent municipality, and—at least in those days—its quite impossible sanitary arrangements. Its picturesque, rugged mountains, and its bold bluff of rocks jutting sheer into the sea. Its splendid panorama of sky and rock and sea, hardly to be sur-

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passed by the Bay of Naples. Near enough to Simon's Town—South Africa's great naval station—to be startled by the boom of its guns by day or the sudden flashing of its searchlights by night.

It was in the year 1899, and the negotiations between Lord Milner and President Kruger, which preceded the now historic Boer ultimatum, were in progress. Kalk Bay—like most other places at that time—was sharply divided into those two political parties, which in the parlance of the day were crudely described as *loyal* and *disloyal*. Feeling was hot and strong in those days, and there was no mincing of words.

The landlord from whom we rented our house was, to put matters plainly, about as disloyal "as they make 'em." He was a Dutchman of the rankest type,—a type which has since undergone considerable amelioration—and when he lost his temper, which was not seldom, did not hesitate to expound various heresies. He was fond of saying that if the pending negotiations ended in war, the

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British would have to fight every inch of their way even from Simon's Town to Cape Town before being finally driven into the sea, as each intervening hamlet and suburb was against them.

Anyone who was in the Colony in the strenuous times which immediately preceded the war—when feeling was at its tensest of anxiety—will easily understand the colloquial hostilities which ensued on such occasions between the cantankerous old Dutchman and my two sons,—young fellows not long from England.

One little incident that occurred at this time will serve to show how high the tide of feeling ran.

On the very day that the Boer ultimatum became known, the two boys procured the mast of an old fishing boat as a flagstaff and hoisted a large Union Jack in front of the house. As soon as it became known what they were doing a number of fishermen whose cottages lay higher up the hill, came down in a body and tendered their services in hoisting the flag, amid loud cheers and cries of "God save the Queen!"

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Unfortunately for the poor fellows they were tenants of the same landlord as ourselves, and they were served next day with a week's notice to quit their cottages as the result of their display of loyal feeling. This was all the greater hardship to them as there were no other cottages available for fishermen in the village. We fortunately had our house upon a six month's lease or no doubt we should have suffered the same treatment and inconvenience.

Our flagstaff with its Union Jack was clearly visible for a long distance to the fishermen in their boats out at sea. One morning some evilly disposed person had cut the ropes and thrown down the post, a deputation of fishermen waited on us before daybreak (!) to express a hope that no news had arrived from the front which had necessitated the hauling down of the British flag! The boys had to go out in their pyjamas to repair the damage and refloat the flag before the men felt sufficiently reassured to disperse.

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We have digressed somewhat from our Henrietta, but the incidents of her sojourn with us are so inextricably connected with the various events of that time that any reference to her invariably recalls memories of those days.

To the mistress of a household in England—who when in want of a domestic flies to the Strand or the Edgware Road registry offices, or scans the advertisement sheet of a daily newspaper, the haphazard fashion of securing servants from their stray relatives and friends encountered in the highways and hedges may seem peculiar. But it is by no means so to the harassed housewife of this country, who knows that her greatest treasure in the way of a servant is often found by the merest chance meeting in the tram or on the high road.

Just as business men in Cape Town will tell you that a greater part of their most profitable business is transacted in chance encounters at the corners of the streets and principal thorough-

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fares, so the woman in search of a help will accost any motherly-looking woman or capable-looking girl with the question "Do you happen to know of a good girl who wants a comfortable place?"

It is all the more necessary to be prepared for emergencies as regards domestics in a country like this, where the Cape-girl or Cape-boy is concerned, because as so many families know to their cost, it is a thing of the most ordinary occurrence for your cook to desert you on the eve of a dinner-party, without a moments notice, on account of some slight friction as to the cleanliness of an apron, or the enormous dimensions of a woolly fringe.

Therefore I was not at all surprised one day when, having been nearly knocked off the side-walk in Rhodes' Avenue, near Groote Schuur in Rondebosch, by a woman and a girl carrying between them a large basket of "washing," at being accosted by the former with the by no means uncommon query, "Missis, do you know of a good place for a handy girl?"

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“Why? do you know of one?” I enquired, wondering whether the “handy girl” was the half-grown hoyden who assisted in knocking me into the road.

“Yes, mum; it’s my girl here. She’s very handy and a great help in washing and ironing. Can cook quite a bit, too, and look after a baby, and,” ended the woman unexpectedly, after enumerating these various perfections, “I shall be very glad to get her out of the house.”

“Why do you want to get rid of her, if you find her so helpful?” was my not unnatural question. “Is she a very naughty girl?”

With pale staring eyes, and mouth wide open, somewhat like a fish, the girl meanwhile regarded me and her mother in turn at our several remarks.

“Why you see, mum, it’s like this. My first husband died many years ago and left me with four children to provide for. Henrietta there, and three younger ones. He was always like that, never had no consideration for anyone but himself! A bad husband he was; but

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a good engineer, always got his four pounds a week, but drink it all he would, and my goodness, missis! tickey beer wasn't good enough for him, nor even a good bottle of sixpenny sherry, but it was whisky at sixpence a tot all the time, like a lord! And there wasn't much of the four pounds a week as *I* ever saw. And then he went and got killed on the line; and not as you may say got killed decent and respectable on his duty, with a pension from the railway for his widow, but killed dead drunk after boozing his money in some bar when he ought to have been on duty! It's not easy, missis, for a woman to keep four children in these days when two of them's too young to leave for a day's work out. So, when my second husband came along—a Cape coloured man he is—I just took and married him, and I can't say, taking one thing with another, as I've much cause to complain. Anyhow, he don't drink, not much more than's good enough, that is, and he brings his money home pretty regular of a Saturday."

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At the mention of the coloured husband, I felt as if I had heard about enough of the family history.

"Yes, yes," I interrupted at this point. "But how about your girl, here? Why do you wish to get rid of her?"

"Well, you see, mum, it's like this," began the garrulous lady again. "My second husband's a good many years younger than what I am, and he's a terrible one for the girls, he is; and now that Henrietta's growing up so big and good-looking, it's all I can do to keep him off her, it is."

The good looks of Henrietta were not very apparent, and the woman's naked manner of expressing a repellent fact was odious. Still the situation somewhat appealed to me. Besides, I had for some time been seeking a suitable white girl, and we had meanwhile submitted to the caprices of a succession of coloured servants.

"Well," I said, "I don't mind taking your girl on trial, but if she has never been in service before, I suppose she knows nothing of the ways of a lady's house and will have to be taught everything."

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“ Well, yes, mum, but she’s willing enough to learn—she’s a bit soft like, but she’s not unhandy.”

“ Do you want to go into service?” I asked, turning to the girl.

Henrietta hung her head and smiled foolishly.

“ Answer the lady when she speaks to you, and say Yes,” said the mother peremptorily.

Henrietta, thus prompted, nodded her head.

She seemed an uncouth creature enough, and one could not picture her a very useful servant. But there was something honest in the broad freckled face: something good-humoured in the wide silly, smile, and something animal-like and faithful in the expression of the queer slanting eyes, which was prepossessing in a way. So I decided to take Henrietta on a month’s trial.

She appeared the next day in a bright-green dress, very short in the skirt and ornamented with broad white braid laid on in bold zig-zag fashion. She carried a small bundle tied in a cloth, that contained—as she explained—her

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“change” and her “working” shoes.

Time passed, and Henrietta was initiated into the mystery of “answering the door” and “showing in” visitors, laying a table, and “handing round” the vegetables.

In some ways she remained to the end the unkempt, uncouth creature who grinned and nodded her head at our first meeting.

To the end, “I don’t mind” was her most gracious rendering of “please” or “thank you.” But in other respects she expanded and softened. And though nothing would ever have made of her anything approaching a creditable parlour maid, we often remarked that she had in her the making of a quite comfortable wife and help-mate to some Scotch or English emigrant farmer or mechanic bent on making South Africa his home. She was fond of children, speaking affectionately even of her mother’s second progeny of piebald boys and girls.

Therefore Henrietta’s ideas on matrimony were a rude shock to us the first time the subject was mooted to her.

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Henrietta had incontinently emptied a pail of dirty water, mingled with potato peelings and cabbage leaves, with a fine indifference about a foot from the back door.

“Look here, Henrietta,” I remarked, “that’s what coloured people do; white people don’t throw dirty things just outside their door. When you are married to a nice Scotch husband what will he say if, when coming home from his work in the evening, he finds a mess like that on the door step?”

Henrietta looked at me quaintly, her Chinese eyes twinkling humorously. “But I would’nt marry a Scotch husband, missis, because they drink too much she remarked; “coloured husbands are much better.”

Remembering her mother’s disparaging reflections on the subject of her Scotch husband, it was not difficult to imagine whence Henrietta imbibed her ideas.

The first time she expressed this appalling opinion, I said sharply, “I’m ashamed of you, Henrietta. I have a great mind to box your ears.”

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The bland innocence of her—"What for, missis?"—showed me the impossibility of any immediate mutual understanding on the subject.

But from that time I set myself the task of the conversion of Henrietta to proper racial views. I would explain to her on all convenient opportunities, the superiority of the domestic arrangements of the white man's home over that of his coloured brother's, and the higher standard of womanhood obtaining in European communities.

I would draw almost Utopian pictures of the dignified status of the white man's wife, in a paradise of a home, preparing toothsome repasts against the homecoming of the sturdy young husband at evening from his daily toil. And Henrietta would listen open-mouthed, to the great neglect of her household duties while the milk boiled over and the chops burned to a cinder.

But in any case I hugged the fond belief that I was eradicating the seeds of evil implanted by her mother's bad example, and perni-

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cious teaching, and fostering a growth of beliefs and sentiments calculated to help bring forth in the future that glorious fruit the ideal of the Imperialist statesman—a white population for South Africa!

This wonderful land of South Africa, with its glamour, its irresistible fascination, its beauty of colouring, its wealth of fertility, its glorious climate, its exhilarating air. If only its vast tracts of fruitful soil could be populated by a sturdy white stock—a stock which is now overcrowding and vitiating European cities, starving themselves and slaying each other in the struggle for life in over-competition—if this could only be, surely nothing of future aggrandisement would be impossible to us.

A white South Africa! Was it not an ideal worth striving for? Was it not the duty of each unit in the white race to endeavour to stem the fatal current which threatened it, if not with extinction certainly with deterioration by this pernicious mingling of alien blood.

Thus did we dream that what

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statesmen and legislators should endeavour to encompass by wise laws and far-reaching regulations, and practical schemes of immigration, we, in our small sphere of influence were also striving to further, by combating the evil which lay at our own door.

About this time my arguments with Henrietta received some degree of outside support from our baker's carman—a young wholesome-looking Yorkshireman—who daily delivered our bread, for on one occasion Henrietta showed me, with some self-conscious giggles, a small cake with which he had presented her, with a capital H picked out in currants on it.

Then a morning came when I thought my triumph was complete, for at breakfast Henrietta was adorned with a large gilt brooch in which was set a glass diamond the size of a sixpence. It also was a gift from the baker, and he had confided to her that if he found a nice sensible wife he thought of setting up as a baker "on his own account." This was on a Wednesday; and the next Sunday was Henrietta's day out.

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She started off arrayed in the gorgeous green gown which, between Sundays, was carefully preserved from vulgar use in her bedroom. She wore cotton gloves several sizes too large for her, and carried a carefully folded clean handkerchief ostentatiously in her hand as if it were some sort of talisman. The baker's gift-brooch was very much in evidence, in the centre of her chest.

She returned, as usual, punctually at 9 o'clock, with a large bunch of dahlias, of which she dutifully asked my acceptance, saying they had been given her by "her step-father's nephew."

I fancied there was an unusually self-complacent expression on the good-humoured freckled face which I had learned to like, but I noticed that the gorgeous diamond brooch was absent.

"Why you've lost your beautiful new brooch, Henrietta," I said.

"I've not lost it, missis, I left it with my mother. My step-father's nephew, he said as it wasn't but a 'tickey' thing of brass and glass, and he's going to give me a

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real lady's brooch when next Sunday I go home."

I felt very downcast. Was this strange fascination of black for white going to be inherited from that odious mother of hers—I wondered.

I do not know how Henrietta explained matters to her baker, but I heard no more about the business he was going to start on his own account.

Soon after this we migrated from Rondebosch to Kalk Bay. The change to the sea was pleasant and almost a necessity after some months of the damp and relaxing air of Rondebosch, and fitted in besides with our plans for Henrietta's future. I had hopes that the extra distance to traverse, and the expensive railway journey, would partially separate her from her home and her mother's and step-father's influence. This was in September, 1899.

Some of the incidents of our life at Kalk Bay have already been detailed; and Henrietta and her doings constituted always a humorous and pleasing thread that ran

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through our daily life in that anxious time, like a thread of gold in a sheet of dark tapestry.

Henrietta's cap, which seemed almost anywhere rather than on her head, her farcical and incomprehensible feuds with all the boys of the neighbourhood, her periodical representations of "Hoppidie," and her quaint dog-like devotion to ourselves never failed to distract our thoughts, relieving the darkness of those terrible days of defeat and disaster to our dear troops at the front.

December came, dark and wintry in England, but glorious with sunshine here,—sunshine so at variance with the gloom and despair filling our hearts at the almost daily reports of reverses which came from the seat of war!

It seems almost like a dream now! Now, when the corpse of racial feeling has been buried so deep, when there are no "pro-Boers" and no "anti-British", when "loyal" and "disloyal" are terms only applied to Zulu chiefs, to recall those days of despair and bitter heart-burnings,

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when tales of ambushes, surprises, faithless guides, mistaken routes, armoured trains destroyed and convoys seized, made our courage fail, and filled us with impotent rage at the treachery which betrayed and the incompetency and ill-advised confidence which made betrayal possible.

Kalk Bay is not Cape Town; and the leaflets of "extra specials," which the Cape newspapers issued, and scattered broad-cast in those days of stress and anxiety, only reached Kalk Bay by the two or three trains that daily passed there, on their way to Simon's Town.

It is like an evil nightmare to remember how, before those trains were due, little knots of Kalk Bay "loyals" gathered on the platform of the station, tense and anxious-eyed, waiting the arrival of the passengers, some one of whom would always bring the precious leaflet.

We had a padre at Kalk Bay, a clergyman of the English Church, a sturdy, bass-voiced Englishman, and it came to be a recognised pro-

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cedure that while we crowded silently around him, his sonorous tones should read aloud the latest news from the front.

They were terrible days; let us thank God they are past and done. Whether we have received the full measure of reward for all we gave for our country, it is for the future to tell.

Through all this storm of feeling Henrietta sailed on. She broke our china, spoilt our dinners, and mis-made our beds with almost un-deviating regularity. But these were trifles which weighed less in those days than in normal times. Loyalty, patriotism, love of queen and country, were all paramount, and seemed to guide every thought and act of life.

Henrietta's ardently professed and evidently growing love for all English and all English ways, drew me to her in a way which can only be understood by those who have lived through like times. She was a loyal British subject at a time when Britain had so many enemies.

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The Yorkshireman baker, it was true, seemed to be lost, but still I saw in Henrietta the promising progenitress of generations of loyal subjects stretching forward into an infinite future.

Her weekly "day out" had for economical reasons been altered by her mother into a monthly Sunday. One Sunday night Henrietta returned and seemed more casual and wool-gathering than usual in her procedure. Various articles of cutlery and crockery seemed to drop out of her hand with even a more malignant pertinacity than was usual under her manipulation. Her wisp of a cap, which had replaced her hat on her return, was more hopelessly awry than ever. Everything most necessary for the Sunday supper-table seemed to be systematically mislaid. I knew there was something wrong.

Just before bed-time, when I entered the kitchen to see that things were right for the night, it burst from Henrietta's overcharged breast like a bomb-shell. "Mother says I've got to go home!" she ejaculated. "She's coming on

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Wednesday to tell you so. Missis, I don't want to go," she added wistfully.

It was useless to discuss the question then, and I decided to await her mother's arrival, quite decided in my mind to oppose Henrietta's return to the home of her step-father by all lawful means.

Wednesday came and brought, not the mother, but the step-father of Henrietta; a shifty-eyed independent-mannered coloured person who explained that his missis, being "sick," the services of Henrietta were urgently required at home; and a month's notice was therewith tendered.

Remembering Henrietta's words of the Sunday before, he was dismissed with nothing more definite than "very well" for an answer.

As he stepped out of the back door, on to the path that led down the hill to the sea and the railway station, Henrietta crawled out on all fours very smutty and sulky of face, from a small broom-and-brush cupboard in the corner of the kitchen—where she had evidently concealed herself during her step-father's visit.

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I was much exercised in my mind. As I have explained, I was interested in Henrietta, not only for her own sake, but because I deemed her to be a possible means, however humble, to aid a great cause. But I was not clear as to how she could be retained in my service in defiance of the authority of her legal guardians, as exemplified in a definite "month's notice" from her mother.

It was Henrietta who solved the difficulty. With her usual abruptness, she said as she slammed some buttered toast on the table at afternoon tea, "Missis, I'm my own boss, and they can't make me go home if I don't want to; and my mother ain't sick a bit, she only wants me home to help with the washing and be married."

"Be married! Whatever do you mean, Henrietta?" I said aghast.

After disentangling some further apparent irrelevancies on the part of Henrietta, I gathered that the family has projected a scheme for the marriage of Henrietta with the above-mentioned nephew—a col-

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oured man—who, it seemed, was a farmer in a small but sufficiently prosperous way on the Cape Flats.

It further transpired that after her step-father's visit of the morning, Henrietta, quite on her own initiative, had taken the astoundingly independent step of interviewing the local police-sergeant, a very intelligent and superior young man formerly a corporal in the Grenadier Guards, who, with his wife, lived at the police-station, a pretty little creeper-covered erection about a hundred yards further down the hill below our house.

I had never taken much account of Henrietta's precise age as regarded its bearing on her independence and liberty of action. I had taken it for granted that while unmarried she was under her mother's undisputed tutelage. But it seemed that according to the Roman-Dutch law, which prevails in the Cape, she being over sixteen years of age was entitled to choose her own place of residence and means of livelihood in defiance of all maternal threats or commands.

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“I am my own boss,” she repeated, “and Sergeant Taylor says my mother can’t make me go home if I don’t want to. And I don’t want to marry a coloured man, and I want to stay with missis.”

Henrietta sniffed and threatened to become sentimental.

It is useless to deny that I found all this very satisfactory. And later we personally interviewed our local police-sergeant, and so convinced ourselves of the correctness of Henrietta’s information. We were therefore prepared to withstand the enemy.

I wrote to Henrietta’s mother, informing her of the interesting legal fact which had come to our knowledge, and of Henrietta’s decision to remain with me. We received no communication of any kind in reply, and took it for granted her relatives had acquiesced in the inevitable, and had withdrawn their claim.

Weeks passed, and in the stirring events of the time, and in the absence of any sign from her mother, the incident of Henrietta’s “month’s

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notice" had really passed from our minds; and that the day that was to witness Lord Roberts' arrival in Cape Town was the day on which the memorable notice expired, had quite escaped our memory.

Every soul in the Peninsula who could be there was in Cape Town to welcome "Bobs," the hero of the hour, the coming saviour who was to retrieve all our losses, and make us forget all past disasters in victory. Hope seemed in the air. Every one seemed convinced that the turn in the tide of fortune had come.

We returned to Kalk Bay in the evening, less despondent than we had felt since the beginning of the war. We arrived at our house to be met by the little "outside" boy, who looked after our fowls and fetched our drinking water from the public fountain, with the news that Henrietta's mother had called for her soon after our departure in the morning, and that Henrietta and all her belongings had *gone!*

There was little else to learn. There had been tears and resis-

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rance on Henrietta's part, and determination and loud scolding on that of the mother.

"Henrietta cried orful," the boy said, "and the old woman shouted at her and thumped her on the back like anything."

Henrietta's resistance seemed to have been stubborn, for it was not until the afternoon that they had finally departed.

I felt very self-reproachful as I realised that in my absence Henrietta had deemed herself deserted at the very time when support was needed. And there was something eminently disheartening in the untidy kitchen, left just as it was on our departure for Cape Town in the morning. The enemy had evidently surprised Henrietta in the midst of washing up the breakfast things; and one broken saucer testified mutely to her marvellous capacity for smashing crockery.

The journey to Cape Town, the heat, and the day's excitement had left me tired and hungry, and this cheerless homecoming to a fireless kitchen and a dinnerless prospect was unexpectedly depressing.

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However, dwellers in the Colonies have to learn to help themselves in all sorts of unlooked-for ways, and there is always that boon and blessing to men, and more particularly women—the “Beatrice” stove!

The outside-boy was inspanned to assist in washing and cleaning up, and with the addition of “tinned” things, that sheet anchor of the shiftless housekeeper or stranded housewife, a make-shift dinner-supper was soon on the table.

The much-needed rest and food had restored some of the colour to existence, and we were discussing Lord Roberts and the future of the war when one of our dogs barked sharply, there was a slight commotion in the yard, the door of the room was burst open unceremoniously, and before us stood Henrietta!

Henrietta, with a large brown paper bundle in her arms, more dishevelled and distraught looking than ever before seen.

She stood blinking stupidly at the sudden transition from the out-

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side darkness to the light of our lamps—and we for the moment were silent from sheer astonishment. She was attired in her Sunday dress and hat, evidently donned by her mother's orders for the journey. The sacred skirt was ripped in several places into those triangular rents which might aptly be assumed as their trade mark by the makers of "barbed wire," while bits of twigs and dried grass were sticking in her hair, and clinging indiscriminately over her jacket and hat.

After recovering from the first surprise, "Why Henrietta," I asked, "how did you get back here?" Henrietta's answers were seldom to the point, so——

"I don't want to go home; I want to stay here," she said with her customary inconsequence.

"Yes; but how did you get back?" I repeated; "Johnny said you had gone to Claremont with your mother."

"I don't want to go home," repeated Henrietta, with a sort of mule-like stubbornness, adding, "my mother went in the train and I got out again."

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It took some questioning to gather the facts.

It appeared that Henrietta, after accompanying her mother to the railway station had been seized with a quite unwonted quickness of decision and presence of mind. When they were seated in the carriage, and just as the train was starting, she had seized her precious bundle of clothes and jumped out, almost at the risk of life and limb.

“But, where have you been all this time?” we enquired.

“I was afraid mother would get out at St. James’ (the next station to Kalk Bay), and catch me again, so I hid up the mountain till I see the lights in the kitchen, and knew missis was back.”

And just as if there were nothing unusual in the occasion or in her appearance, Henrietta put her bundle on a chair and proceeded to clear away the supper-things with her usual abominable clatter and noise.

But we felt genuinely touched at the girl’s rough devotion to ourselves; and decided that on the

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morrow, with the aid of our police-sergeant, and armed with the magistrate's authority, we would make her relations definitely understand that Henrietta was her own mistress, and was to be no further molested while in our service under fear of the law's penalties.

Later, I communicated our decision to Henrietta, whom I found in the kitchen weeping unrestrainedly over her damaged hat and torn skirt.

She went to bed with her little snub nose very red from rubbing and crying, but her face looking like one broad smile over the reassurance that she had nothing to fear in the future from her relatives' interference, and that she should accompany me on the morrow to purchase a new skirt and hat; while she could hardly credit that the glorious Sunday garment, which she had hitherto looked on as something too splendid for human nature's daily needs, might be darned and patched and relegated to a "working dress."

The war at the front dragged on. Lord Roberts, in Cape Town,

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concentrated his forces, organised, got together his army, and finally left for the front. His victorious progress with the deathless story of the Majuba-Paardeberg, culminating in his entry into Pretoria, are matters of history.

Lord Roberts was an old friend of our family, and an intimate friend of my father's, and now that he was at the head of the troops nothing could restrain my youngest son, then a lad of 17, from volunteering for active service. By especial favour of Lord Roberts he was admitted into his Body-guard, and soon after left for the front.

From that day until the declaration of peace, more than two years after, there was never to be any peace of mind for me. For one thing suspense, which is so much more difficult to bear than sharpest grief, was the daily portion of most women in those days. Disloyalty was so rife—the necessity for caution in divulging military movements so vital—censorship so strict that news was so cruelly difficult to obtain, and came so slowly.

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Frequently the first information that relatives received of an engagement in which husband or son had been killed or wounded was merely a list of "casualties," in which his name appeared with the date and locality of the casualty affixed, and even then sometimes a week or more after the event! Indeed it was only those in England—in London—within reach of the war office, who ever received reliable news with any promptitude.

And then the mother's nature is the same all the world over. My house was no longer home to me when my boy was no longer there. But though I longed to get further north, nearer to Lord Roberts and his precious Body-guard, women, for good and obvious reasons, were not wanted at the front, and a permit to the Transvaal was impossible to obtain.

It was about this time that urgent and distressing family news from home made it necessary for us to go to England. The hardship of having to leave the country at such a time can easily be imagined. It seemed like deserting one's

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colours. But the need was imperative.

Before leaving we were careful to find a situation for Henrietta with a lady whom she already knew as a constant visitor to the house. The lady had two little children, and Henrietta was unaffectedly fond of children; and she was also to get slightly higher wages than with us.

She mourned our departure loudly, and with evidently sincere distress at first, and declared she would die if we did not take her with us. But we assured her of our return within six months, and promised she should without fail come back to us on our arrival, and she seemed to become content.

Therefore our disappointment was all the keener when, after having been about a month in England, we received a letter from her mistress saying that Henrietta had not proved so satisfactory as she had anticipated from our liking for the girl, and said she would not be sorry when we returned to the Colony and took the girl off her hands again.

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The next news was even more lamentable. Henrietta had returned from spending her "Sunday out" at her mother's house, more than an hour late at night, somewhat "cheeky," accompanied by a young coloured man, and had given a month's notice, stating she was going to be married to the young man in question, who she said was the nephew of her step-father.

The marriage actually took place a month later, and so Henrietta was lost to us.

And lost, to our way of thinking, to the Empire.

For we maintain that the marriage of these two pure-bred European women—her mother and herself—to coloured men was a loss to the State of a valuable asset. Not only in their own person, but in that of all the children born to both of them.

A loss which surely statesmen should endeavour to obviate by adequate legislation, and clergymen by exhortation strive to guard against. While even masters and mistresses of the smallest households might further the cause

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by discouraging by every means in their power any avoidable *familiar intercourse*, between their white servants and any coloured people with whom the daily necessities of life force them into contact.

Deductions.

THE GREAT Imperialist and Statesman, Mr Chamberlain, has laid down an axiom that "what is morally wrong can never be politically right"; and the authors of the foregoing sketches from life suggest that the sanctioning, or non-prevention of the present unrestrained sexual intercourse between the black and white races of South Africa is distinctly a moral and therefore a political crime.

A crime of great magnitude, for it is the self-murder of a nation. A white nation whose mission it should be to maintain a supremacy of highest civilisation throughout the world, and who by their suicide sacrifice their mission, and abandon the subject races, whose future is in their hands, to a misguided straying along a path which they were never intended to travel.

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It is said that the Britishers are a "silly people". In some respects this may be true. But it is also true that once these people—these silly people—are roused, the Bulldog leaps from somewhere and grasping a truth grips it until he has squeezed it to bottom truth. And then, and then only, safety is in sight.

There is an instance of this in the late naval sensation with its menace to British supremacy on the sea. And now that the people—those silly people—have grasped it, the danger is gone.

So with the present threatened danger to our national life by the mixing, in marriage, of black and white. Once let the white race grasp its true significance, viz.: that it not only degrades but threatens extinction of the white race in South Africa, and the danger will vanish.

The question of the age, that question which seems to overshadow all others and outdistance all others in importance today is undoubtedly the "colour" question.

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Whether in America, with its ghastly accompaniments of negro "outrages" and lynchings and its present serious impasse of a political majority of the black; and where President Taft proposes to reverse ex-President Roosevelt's policy of placing negro officials in white communities; or in Asia, where the grisly spectre of the "Yellow Peril" projects itself on the mind-retina as a hideous leprosy, over-spreading and infecting and laying waste the white areas; or here in Africa, where the movement towards Closer Union has brought the question so prominently to the front, it is incontestable that at present the question of the coloured man is everywhere paramount.

Paramount whether regarded, as by some, as a religious duty and sacred responsibility to be solemnly undertaken and discharged without any sentimental bias or instinctive or inherited prejudice regarding colour; or—as with others—as a vital menace to be seriously and tactically guarded against, and desperately and uncompromisingly

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contended with when the critical occasion arises.

While it is conceded on all hands that the future grandeur of the Empire depends on the welfare and proper aggrandisement of her colonies, this Colony of South Africa, so far from adding any lustre or profit to the British Empire, threatens by reason of this same colour question to be lost to the white race altogether. Most assuredly will it so be if what has taken place in the southern parts of Cape Colony is imitated throughout the sub-continent.

There are two ways in which South Africa can, and will be, lost to the white man, unless effectual preventive and precautionary measures are undertaken in time.

One is *politically*; by a numerical majority, should all natives obtain the franchise, when, as Mr Fred. Bell, of Johannesburg, points out, there is nothing in the future to prevent an absolutely overwhelming and invincible black majority from "voting solid" on some measure utterly disastrous and fatal to white supremacy, or

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even white existence, in South Africa.

And the other is *morally*; by the steady and certain gradual deterioration and disintegration of the white race, by inter-marriage and unrestrained sexual intercourse with the coloured.

It is with this latter aspect of the question, and not with the vexed one of franchise—though indeed the two are most intimately connected—that we would ask our readers to deal.

In colonies such as India and South Africa—where the aboriginal race is a coloured one—the proper aggrandisement and government of that colony demands that, if possible, the white population shall numerically compare reasonably with the coloured. Failing that, that the white population shall be manifestly and indisputably the *superior* race. And Britishers have perhaps never sufficiently clearly realized how much the fulfilment of those demands depends on the maintenance of a *purity of race*.

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The little Englanders, the Miss Colenso of the world, and certain members of the liberal party, whose object in life would appear to be the belittlement of the mother country in her treatment of her native children, have combined to throw a sort of glamour round the black man, which is incomprehensible to the white man who is brought much in contact with him. And religious bodies in South Africa, such as the Salvation Army and Seventh Day Adventists who represent the recognition of a perfect equality between the races as a religious duty; missionaries who encourage mixed marriages between white and black converts; mission delegates to Europe, whose religious principles and pecuniary interests alike are involved in enlisting the sympathies, and opening the purse-strings of their home audiences; all combine to confuse the issue, to exhibit the coloured race in a false light to the eyes of the newcomer to this country, to produce a false impression in his mind, and to dispose him to overlook the fact that, however favour-

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ably and picturesquely represented, the coloured race is an inferior one.

It is *because* of this intrinsic inferiority that, in our view, the present unrestrained intercourse between the two colours, and the increasing number of mixed marriages (a present chiefly confined to the Cape Colony), is to be so strongly deprecated.

The side issues of the coloured question, as well as its main features, and the effect it will have on the country, cannot fail to be interesting to any thoughtful mind who has the future of South Africa and its inhabitants, as a race, at heart. And it is opportune to discuss at a time when the framework of a future South African nation, which is being planned by the delegates to the "Convention" is endangered, and threatened with wreckage, at the outset by differences of opinion on this very subject.

Lord Selborne, in the course of his speech (February 27, '09), advocating so strongly the rights and liberties and privileges—education-

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al, political and social—of the native, ridiculed as a bogey the extermination of the white race by the black, on the ground that the white race would always prove itself “for all purposes of competition the superior of the black”; and spoke of the various occasions when a mere handful of British troops, or Dutch settlers, had held their own against apparently overwhelming odds of natives. Of course history incontestably proves this to be true. A strenuous white race can, and almost invariably does, hold its own against a large majority of an inferior race.

But our argument is that it is a strenuous white race *alone* which possesss this necessary strength of resistance in the face of overwhelming odds. And it is this identical white race which it is so vital to maintain *pure and strenuous* which, for want of proper supervision, is being gradually vitiated, and is dwindling into a brown, whitey-brown, or yellow race, physically and morally incapable of withstanding the sturdier native races, should occasion arise,

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even if their sympathies continue to be with the whites, which in itself is problematical.

As Imperialists—with a wholesome opinion of the intrinsic value of the white character—we would rather hold the view of Lord Selborne that the “grit” of the white man will carry him through triumphantly in spite of disadvantages and disparity of numbers, than agree with a certain member of the Ministry of the Cape House of Assembly (Mr. Sauer) who, in a speech at about the same date, on the Draft Act of Union, definitely laid it down, as his opinion, that the white race in South Africa must ultimately inevitably be swamped by the black; and be gradually driven to the coast, with the last tower of refuge at the Cape, with Cape Town as the citadel!

Whether such desponding views be eventually justified or not, is for the future to determine; but there is surely no reason for the present generation to sit with folded hands awaiting their fate. Each obstacle, each danger in the life of nations,

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as in the life of individuals, must be dealt with, to the best of human capability, as it comes along.

We allow that anything like a reasonable numerical equality of the races is hardly ever to be anticipated. What then is the situation?

We see handfuls of white here and there, in various isolated localities, surrounded by vast hordes of blacks. And year by year the fatal disparity in numbers, further assisted by native polygamy, augments increasingly. We cannot prevent the prolific multiplying of the black. Civilisation no longer permits tribal wars. The native tribes may no longer go out "killing" and so "eat" each other. Infanticide as a means of checking population is sternly frowned down.

Indeed, let us deprecate at the outset anything so economically insane as an objection to the existence of the coloured races in themselves. We are not suggesting anything like the German policy of General Von Trotha who, in German South West Africa, avowed

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that his aim with regard to the native was extermination.*

On the contrary in India, in America, and still more emphatically in South Africa, the welfare and future prosperity of the country depends on the usefulness and services of the natives to an incalculable extent. It is only when there is an attempt at "assimilation," at a mixture of blood and race that their existence becomes an evil which cannot be too carefully guarded against.

If therefore, as we have pointed out, the alarming increase, in the ratio of black births to white, cannot be controlled, it remains to us only to augment the white population. And how can this aim be compassed? The legitimate and usual methods of aided emigration, and Government encouragement of settlers are of course a means to

*Vide the controversy in early part Feb. '09 in Berlin, between Herr Dernburg (German Col. Sec.) and General Von Trotha (commanding forces in German S.W. Africa against Hottentots). The latter declaring he was compelled to adopt that policy, as it was impossible to fight against natives in accordance with the Geneva convention.

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the end, but they do not prove adequate. Nor is it within the bounds of human skill to increase the birth rate amongst the whites.

But it is quite within the province of the State to endeavour that those children who are born to white men or white women, should themselves be white. Whereas, it is a lamentable fact, that at present a very large percentage of them are *not* so, owing to a laxity and want of supervision which acknowledges and allows those mixed unions, which we so strongly deplore.

And unless legislation can successfully cope with the difficulty in the various colonies, it would appear as if the only alternative would be that offered by some notably by H. J. Crocker (in the *Transvaal Leader*), in which the writer suggests that the only hope of salvation for South Africa is in the *entire separation* of the two colours, proposing to segregate and locate the natives in the tropical zones of the Continent, allocating the whites to the temperate zones. Nor do we think this measure

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would be unpopular with a large proportion of natives, bearing as it does, in its main aspect a strong similarity to their own tribal and communal proclivities. This view, to a certain extent, is borne out by the deputation of the Basuto chiefs to the King (Feb. '09), protesting against any assimilation in the Union.

But in the southern parts of Cape Colony, and more especially within a certain radius of the Peninsula, the situation is narrowed, accentuated and crystalised in a way that makes it not of the future, but of the present. And in the preceding sketches we have given instances of various types, faithfully true to nature, and of incidents which have, one and all, come within our own personal experience, showing the powerful influence on the white—an influence not for good—which the coloured race exercises.

This doctrine of influence does not apply so strongly as a rule to the travelled visitor to these shores. The man, or woman, who hails from India, America or countries

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where black and yellow races are known, and properly appreciated quantities, seems to be comparatively immune. It applies more particularly to dwellers in European cities, imbued with the half-compassionate half-admiring interest in the "black man" for which Exeter Hall is so largely responsible—and which results in the newly-landed white man or woman, especially of the middle or lower classes, being blind to—or failing to realise—their racial superiority to the coloured men and women with whom they are brought into daily contact.

It is this which to our mind makes the theory of settling the colour question by what is termed "assimilation" so pernicious and dangerous. For the hybrid race which would inevitably result from unrestrained intercourse between the races will be as inferior, physically, mentally and morally, as the hybrid progeny of a mixture of two such naturally antagonistic races has always proved to be. For there are many who assert that in

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the progress of civilisation, the coloured man assimilates always the worst that is in the white man with whom he associates. So the half-caste is said to inherit evil from both progenitors, and good from neither. There seems always to be a degeneration of the progeny in the direction of the coloured progenitor, of whatever sex, rather than an ascent to the higher level of the white. Just as in mixed marriages the white partner, of whatever sex, seems almost invariably to retrograde towards the level of the coloured mate. And this seems to have been formerly universally assumed.

Indeed a contempt and repudiation of the "half-caste" seems to have been much accentuated in earlier times in this country, both amongst the black and white races. There are evidences of this in much of what may be called the folk-lore of the early Dutch settlers.

A Dutch farmer in the Paarl district, was driving on one occasion in his Cape cart, in which

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a pair of mules were inspanned. One of the mules, a somewhat fidgety young mare, was about as unmanageable as her sex often are. After vainly trying chastisement and cajolment, the farmer resigned himself to a dead stop for some minutes, to allow the lady to recover her temper.

“What else can you expect” he said disgustedly, when at last she was induced to continue on her way, “isn’t the devil between her ears?” His companion in the cart, an Englishman, was somewhat puzzled. “What do you mean?” he asked.

“Well, you see, she’s a half-and-half, and we have a saying that the *devil sits between the ears of the half-and-half*. She’s only a mule, and I feed and stable and treat her like a horse. And what does she do? She behaves like a donkey all the time she can.”

And this antipathy seems to have been active in black races as well. The natives also have their proverb on the subject, as Olive Schreiner has somewhere pointed out.

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It runs,—“The white man we know, the black man we know, but who are you?” And yet in this colony the prejudice seems to be dying out,—an ignoble death.

In some countries it still exists in all its strength. In West Virginia, for instance, where mixed marriages are decreed illegal.

And who that has been in India can ignore the contemptuous repugnance which is instinctive in the true white towards the “Eurasian,” the “Chi-Chi,” the half-caste. But the “Eurafrican” (to coin a word) thinks himself far from an object of either dislike or contempt; and is, by a large proportion of the white population, looked upon with a quite tolerant appreciation. Indeed there are pueriles who would argue that as the white in this country is otherwise doomed to partial or total extinction, the only hope of salvation is in making common cause with the black—conciliating them, fraternising with them, intermarrying, and in fact, *raising a common race.*

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We maintain that no end, however urgent, can justify such a means.

There are certain suggestions that occur to the lay mind as calculated to minimise the evil and further the object in view, which however can only be dealt with by expert legislation. We put forward a few that occur to us at the time of writing:—

1. *The declaring illegal of mixed marriages, as in certain parts of America.*

There are many moral and honourable men and women at present contracting such unions, who would never contemplate such a course if cognisant that their offspring would be illegitimate.

2. *The prohibition of intercourse with the coloured woman to all men engaged in the military service, including members of all Volunteer forces.*

Any educated European, who has given thought to the subject, must assuredly, on first arrival in Cape Colony, have experienced an ugly shock on meeting smart, well

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set-up English Tommies shamelessly parading the thoroughfares, affectionately arm in arm with coloured damsels of various degrees of duskiness. The probable results of such intimacy, bearing in mind the standard of morality of the average coloured woman, can be easily inferred. It is a lamentable but certain fact that a regiment of young Britishers newly arrived from home—especially those entering on their first experience of foreign service—are attracted, rather than repelled, by the coloured or native woman. The same restrictions suggested for the military service to be, of course, applied to all European sailors ashore in naval stations like Simon's Town.

We believe that any such regulations on the part of the authorities, far from arousing animosity or raising difficulties on the part of the coloured population would, on the contrary, be acceptable to at least the male portion of it.

3. *The inauguration of what might be termed "Purity of race associations," whose ob-*

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ject shall be, on all occasions, to inculcate the doctrine that white men and women in South Africa shall mate only with their own colour; and thus endeavour to ensure that their offspring shall be such as will throw in their lot with the white, and will be of a calibre likely to maintain its supremacy in the coming struggle between black and white which seems so likely in the future.

We have "Empire" leagues, to inculcate loyalty, "naval defence" leagues to stimulate interest in the naval service, "vigilance" societies to safeguard the morality of our communities.

But this, which is so important to the life of both community and Empire, seems curiously disregarded.

4. *The advisability in all schools, of whatever denomination, rigorously to separate children of the two colours.*

There is no need to enlarge on the strength and importance of childish impressions. It is not reasonable to expect from a white

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child, brought up from the tenderest years in close and daily communication and intercourse, on equal terms, with coloured companions, that reserve and innate sense of superiority of race which is so necessary to prevent any undue familiarity in their future relations; that consciousness of superiority which is so marked and noticeable in white children in India, where a toddling infant of four or five, if it be of the white race, arrogates as if by right, and is tendered without question, the obedience and subjection of burly native men often the descendants of long lines of warriors and landowners.

No doubt this feeling of white superiority would require time to develop, in a country where the tendencies have been so levelling as in this since slavery was abolished. But that the feeling existed strongly with early English and Dutch settlers, and has only lately been lost, is abundantly proved by history.

5. *Some kind of undertaking on the part of householders and employers of sorts, who*

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engage the services of white female servants, that a certain supervision shall be exercised. Such supervision to be directed towards inculcating in the mind of the white woman her racial superiority.

* * * * *

The Cape Prime Minister (Mr. John X. Merriman), in replying to the deputation of Ministers of Religion, pointed out that though they insisted upon a recognition of native equality as a religious duty, they fell short when it became a question of social amenities, remarking—"I don't meet many of them at your dinner-tables." (27th March, '09.)

Mr. W. P. Schreiner (an eminent barrister and ex-Prime Minister of the Cape Colony), speaking on the Draft Act of Union in the Cape House of Assembly (1st April, '09), with regard to the native franchise, endeavoured to surmount the difficulty by stating that there was no "necessary connection" in "matters social" and "matters political." Later, Mr. Malan argued on the same lines.

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We entirely disagree with both speakers, and hold that the one necessarily, in course of time, leads to and includes the other with disastrous results. It is the withholding of prominent *official* positions from the coloured man which alone safeguards his exclusion from *social* privileges. A member of Parliament, even if coloured, could scarcely, and could not for long, be refused the entree to the family circle of another member (of a white race) with whom he is on friendly and familiar terms outside that circle, except by a stultifying "eating" of one's political utterances.

There seems to be, on the part of the champions of coloured equality, an impression that a cruelty, or an injustice, is inflicted upon the coloured man by the refusal to acknowledge such equality; whereas, as a matter of fact, a sharp dividing line is distinctly for his happiness and welfare. The position of a half-caste who, having been educated and civilised to any degree of sensitiveness or mental susceptibility finds himself in unsympathetic

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and alien surroundings, would be far from happy or enviable; and we are much mistaken if such a man would not be more likely to blame that government, and reproach those partisans, who by their ill-judged cry of racial equality had brought about his present condition, rather than experience any gratitude towards them.

* * * * *

An incident showing the danger, a danger that might result in acute cases in public rioting or even in civil war, of anything like equality of social intercourse between alien races, occurred quite recently in America, where the daughter of Archdeacon Emery, of California, was mobbed in the street, owing to the intense public resentment aroused by her betrothal to the son of the Japanese General Aoki.

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